Hurricane Irma Issue

The Lions' Pride

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Lions Take Shelter as Irma Aproaches

By Kiely Huynh and Kristin Vitagliano

Contributing Writers

As Hurricane Irma traveled up the Florida peninsula, the Saint Leo community made up of students, faculty, security, and family took shelter to ride out the storm.

At 11:15 a.m. on September 10, Saint Leo residents were evacuated from their dorms and told to start making their way to either Lewis Hall, St. Edwards Hall, or the Marmion/Bowman Activities center depending on which resident building they live in.

Irma's arrival has been fearfully anticipated, and preparations for the catastrophic storm began taking place on the University campus after classes were canceled this past Wednesday.

On Aug. 30, Hurricane Irma formed off Cape Verde near Africa's coast. Over the course of the next few days, Irma became one of the Atlantic Ocean's strongest storms in history reaching a category 5, the highest rating a hurricane can obtain. At her highest, wind speeds were 185 miles per hour, and she reached a diameter of about 400 miles wide, big enough to cover almost all of the state of Florida like a very wet blanket.

During this time, Irma began traveling west, barreling through the Caribbean, destroying homes and taking a few lives with her. The state of Florida began issuing mandatory curfews and evacuations as gas, plywood, and water became hot commodities as the state prepared for what was promised to be a catastrophic storm. In addition to all the preparations, Florida had a field day in creating memes to keep the humor in such a serious time.

Finally, on Sept. 10, around 8 a.m., Irma's eye made landfall in the Florida Keys.

Throughout the Saint Leo campus, there was a chorus of student voices saying "this sucks" as they walked in the drizzling rain and wind to their assigned shelter. Claiming classrooms and hallways ensued as everyone threw down blankets and called a piece of floor their temporary abode.

Some students came more prepared than others, bringing along blow-up mattresses and pool floats, while others only a bed sheet. Some brought enough food and water for days, while others only the bare minimum, hoping and praying that they would get their freedom after the estimated 36 hours were up.

Students were forced to evacuate their dorm rooms and spent a few days setting up camp in the hallways of their apartment buildings.

As weather conditions worsened, students were even asked to leave the halls of their apartment buildings in order to seek shelter in Lewis Hall.

Photos by Kadyann Stupart

When asked how the students prepared for Hurricane Irma, one sophomore psychology major, Destiny Herbert said she has been planning for the past two days. She began "getting all the necessities packed, and then making trips to Walmart and moving stuff away from windows and the necessities." Still, Herbert was excited for the experience, stating that, when she graduates, she'd never forget this exhilarating time.

Natalia Garcia, a sophomore Global Studies major, said she didn't come prepared, but the University staff made her feel safe and comfortable.

"With Saint Leo's help, I feel really good now," she said.

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Editorials

Hurricane Irma: A Night Filled with Fear

By Emily Kochanski
Campus News Editor

After learning that Hurricane Irma would hit us only at a category 1 storm, I wasn't exactly shaking in my boots. However, I quickly discovered that I was wrong to not be scared. On Sunday, Sept. 10, I learned that although one may be well prepared for the physical damage that may come, you can never be truly ready for the toll that impending chaos can take on your sense of security.

The last major storm that I can vaguely recall experiencing was Hurricane Frances, which struck in 2004. Aside from spending a sweltering 5 days without running water or electricity, Frances didn't seem to me the frightening phenomenon that the weathermen had foretold. I scoffed at Irma once I saw that she had been reduced to a middling category 1. Like Frances, I figured she was all bark and no bite. But Irma ended up biting pretty hard.

In the days leading up to Irma's arrival, the folks and I stocked up on all the necessities. Food, water, flashlights, etc. We'd filled the bathtub up to the brim, along with several pitchers and empty jugs so that we'd have a surplus of water to fill the back of the toilet tank with to allow us to continue to use the facilities. While dear old dad and I busied ourselves outside removing objects that could get lifted by the wind, mom worked diligently indoors converting our hall closet into a sort of safe room should we need new shelter. By all accounts, we were ready.

The big day finally arrived and our little family huddled in the living room glued to the television, diligently tracking Irma's trajectory, speed, and size. After an hour or so of flickering, the power finally went out around 8 p.m. Sitting in total darkness while the wind picked up outside and without the reliable weatherman's words of reassurance, that's when one's courage begins to falter. Everything seems scarier when veiled in darkness. Suddenly, the wind wasn't just blowing, it was howling, screaming. The rain wasn't just falling, it was pounding.

With nothing to distract you but the sounds of chaos ensuing just beyond the safety of your 4 walls, reality hits harder than the rain on your rooftop. The full extent of the situation, of the danger, is all at once blindingly visible and before you know it, you're running from room to room reevaluating the strength of every single window and door. I was in full-on panic mode within half an hour after losing electricity. All my senses were on red alert, which is why I was the first one in the house to hear the dripping.

One of our kitchen ceiling tiles had sprung a leak. I watched, utterly dumbfounded, as in a matter of minutes it evolved from a rhythmic dripping into a steady stream of water, the tile drooping. Barely an hour later, the tile collapsed under the weight of the water and crashed with a wet thud to the floor. Two more tiles had also begun bowing. As I began covering the kitchen floor with towels to catch the falling water, I started doing math in my head, never a good idea for me. If the hurricane is outside, but water is coming inside, then that means…oh, my gosh, the roof is gone!

I didn't sleep a wink that night. Instead, I laid awake in fear that my entire house would come crashing down around me. A few days before, a family friend had told us that when she was a child, her parents had told her that if she didn't behave during the storm, the hurricane was going to get her. And thinking back to that, I began to feel that Irma was this ravenous beast and my family and I were its prey. It was outside stalking us, taunting us, before it finally could sink its claws into us. By 3 a.m., I had literally worried myself sick.

When a storm traps you inside, it's the waiting that does you in. The thinking of those terrible thoughts and not being able to peek outside to confirm those fears. When Monday morning rolled around and the worst had passed, my folks and I went outside to assess the damage. Luckily for us, the house was still standing, roof intact, and the worst of the debris was a couple hundred severed tree branches littering the yard. We'd caught the mother of all lucky breaks.

We spent the following 3 days without electricity. We lugged bucket after bucket of water in from our swimming pool to refill the emptying bathtub. We even resorted to bathing in the pool when that icky, unshowered feeling finally overwhelmed us, an activity I pray that I never have to do again.

Though they'd reduced me to a basket case only days ago, the events of Irma feel like nothing to me now. Still, I will never underestimate the power of a hurricane ever again. The next time a category 1 rolls around, I plan on leaving home to seek better shelter. If a category 5 decides to pay us a visit, I'm leaving the state.

Photo by Emily Kochanski

Leaky ceiling tiles may mean some quick (but pricey) roof repair is necessary.

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Letters To The Editor

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Campus News

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One of the resident assistants, Jan Dahrendorff, a senior psychology major, said that the schools tried "preparing as best as possible, try to maintain a positive attitude towards everything, and keeping people positively engaged, just making the best of the situation" as Hurricane Irma made her way across Florida.

Students were nervous though in having to vacate their dorms and take shelter. Maro Young, a junior accounting major, opened up about her concerns.

"At first we were kind of freaking out and sleeping in the hallway. After a little while of processing it's not too bad," Young said.

However, preparing for the hurricane was only the first step to surviving the storm. For some, camping out in classrooms and hallways made for a memorable adventure. When first settling in, Michael Lee, a junior biology major, was optimistic.

"I wanted to create some sort of bond and put differences aside, just in case," Lee explained. "Because with this hurricane, we don't know what's going to happen."

A sophomore duo, Mike Simmons, Criminal Justice, and Ethan Ticehurst, Biology, were even looking forward to "it being like a giant sleepover" and couldn't wait to "cuddle with friends."

During the storm, students had to use their time wisely. Many students made use of the available electricity, using any outlet they could find in the building to keep their devices at full power. Students also found plenty of ways to keep themselves entertained. The screens in the classrooms played movies and sports games, and many played games like Uno, Monopoly, soccer, and ping pong. Others just slept or talked with friends.

The students weren't the only ones taking shelter. Professors, security, and even a couple of parents gathered to ride out of the rain and wind. One parent, Dr. Lakesha Isom, a Palm Beach minister and real estate developer, came to shelter with her only daughter. After a normally three-and-a-half-hour trip took five and a half hours, she credited her power of faith for getting her to the campus safely.

"Hurricane season occurs every year we haven't been through this in at least ten years," Dr. Isom said. "In any time of anxiety, the main thing we have to do is pray. What else can we do? It's nature; we can't call the law, we can't arrest nature."

During all of this, the core value of community was expressed as the students and staff of Saint Leo worked together prepared as much as they could for Irma's wrath. In an email message sent to out to the student body after the storm had passed, Saint Leo President, Dr. William Lennox commended the student staffers who worked tirelessly to make their fellow students and guests feel safe.

"Our Residence Life staff cared for students as Irma's eye barreled down on University Campus," said Lennox. "Sheltering more than 600 students (and nearly 100 staff members to ensure their safety) was a massive undertaking and was done flawlessly by our Security & Safety, Facilities Management, Student Affairs, and Dining Services teams."

Lennox went on to say that several people were taking notice of his decision to stay on campus as well and were offering their sincere thanks.

"That was nice, but the real heroes are those mentioned above who found a way to shelter, feed, and keep our students safe throughout this challenging time. Many of them brought their families here so they could continue working regardless of whatever personal damage may have occurred at their own homes."

After safely taking shelter and getting comfortable in their strange but safe new surroundings, the only thing left for the Saint Leo community to do was wait out the storm and pray for the best.

Students had to find ways to occupy their time in Lewis Hall. Some played cards or board games, others played music or watched television.

In the days leading up to Irma's arrival, the campus began making preparations to keep the grounds, buildings, and students safe.

When the storm had finally passed, students gathered up their belongings and were escorted back to their dorms.

Other than a few fallen trees, the campus suffered no significant damage.

Photos by Kadyann Stupart

National

Saint Leo WorldWide Stands Strong After Hurricanes

Randawnique Coakley
Managing Editor &
Worldly Education Editor

In a matter of weeks, both Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma has caused major damage in the United States, affecting Texas, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, and North Carolina. These hurricanes caused significant damages to properties and even resulted in numerous deaths. The storms also affected the Saint Leo main Campus and Centers. About 8,000 students were impacted by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Harvey, according to University Communications.

Following Corpus Christi being impacted by Hurricane Harvey in early Sept, there were numerous initiatives on the University Campus helping out those affected. In fact, in a message to students, President Dr. William J. Lennox Jr. suggested ways to assist the situation, such as helping students who may call or email for help, keeping victims in one's prayers, and donating to an organization that are on the ground giving aid. There were also efforts from individual organizations on campus, including the TKE fraternity, who held a pie-throwing fundraiser to raise money for Red Cross to help the victims of Hurricane Harvey.

Only days after Hurricane Harvey wreaked havoc in Houston and other parts of Texas did Hurricane Irma follow suit, bringing chaos to the Caribbean and multiple southeastern states. In spite of the storm, there were many initiatives from the Saint Leo community banding together before, during, and after the storm. In fact, Lennox commented on this in another message to the student body.

"The devastation hit us first in the west as Hurricane Harvey landed in Texas, including Corpus Christi. Then Irma's impact began this past Sunday at our southernmost location in Key West and continued north through Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina with 27 of our locations impacted," said Lennox "It is at moments like these that the vast reach of our university becomes very clear. In addition to our outreach to faculty, staff, and students at these locations, the huge network of our online students and adjunct faculty was a concern. And finally, our thoughts also turned to the tens of thousands of alumni in the paths of these two storms."

As Lennox mentioned, Hurricane Irma caused damage in the states of Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina, affecting numerous centers. The first Center impacted by this storm was the Key West Center. Hurricane Irma was a Category 4 storm when it made landfall in the Florida Keys, according to ABC News. The Keys took a brutal hit from the Hurricane; according to CBS News, FEMA estimated that 25 percent of homes were destroyed due to the strong forces of the hurricane; however, not all buildings took a major hit, including The Key West Center. According to the Key West Center director, Alaina Plowdrey, there was only minimal damage suffered by the hurricane; the damages include a soaked rug and an office tile leaking minimally. However, some students and faculty's property did not fare so well.

"For the most part, they are doing well, respectively. Some faculty members have lost large portions of their homes, vehicles, and boats. I am currently calling all students I haven't spoken to already this week to assess their conditions post-Irma and abilities to continue on in their courses. Many of the faculty, students and staff are still away," said Plowdrey.

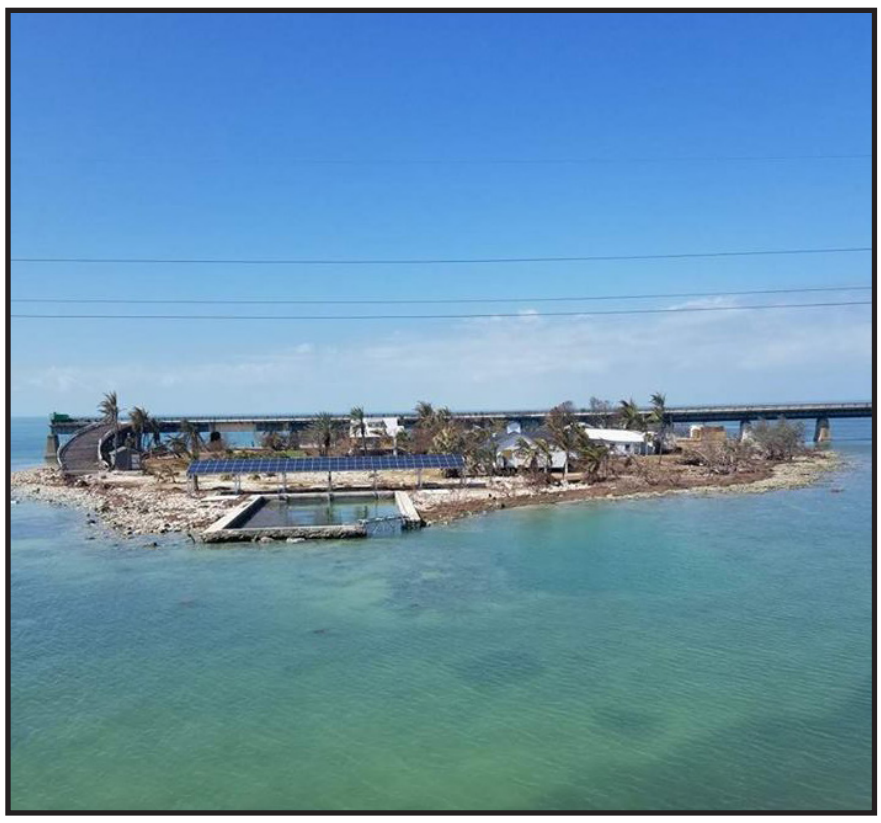

Photo taken by Wakens Leonard

The Florida Keys took a big hit by Hurricane Irma, with the students, faculty, and staff from the Key West being affected as well. They are apart of 6500 WorldWide students what were affected Hurricane Irma.

> ***"The Saint Leo community feels very blessed that our center facilities sustained only minor damage. We know that many of our students continue to struggle with the impact of Irma and Harvey in their local communities. Our faculty have been very flexible in working with students who need extensions due to power outages and other storm related damages."***
>
> ***- Dr. Melanie Storms, Vice President of WorldWide***

Photo taken by Wakens Leonard

Along with the students from Key West being affected, over 100 students who study online from Puerto Rico and other parts of the Caribbean.

Reentry to Florida Keys began Sept. 17; however, there is limited resources, such as clean water, electricity, and food, according to Plowdrey.

Before, after, and during hurricane Irma, the Center was able to stay in touch with the students, faculty and staff for the hurricane, with 90 percent of the student population evacuating the area.

"The faculty members in Key West have been amazing in making sure their students are doing well, keeping them informed and granting them enough time to finish assignments while we wait to return. Online faculty has also been extremely helpful in granting extensions," said Plowdrey. "We still have students without internet and most of our faculty, staff and student body just regained phone service a few days ago. Consistency in outreach, emails and phone calls, has been applied in this situation to ensure safety and contact for all."

Following the storm, the priorities are to ensure the safety of the people at the Center and to ensure students continue with schooling.

"First and foremost to know my students, faculty and staff are safe, second to begin an estimated plan of re-opening and make sure students that want to continue their courses for FA1 have adequate extensions, support and resources and those who want to drop due to their homes being damaged or the demands of work are able to and have a successful plan for the next term," said Plowdrey.

Other than the Florida Keys, Hurricane Irma struck numerous places in South Florida, such as Miami and Naples. Central Florida was anticipating the storm to cause destruction as well. In fact, according to WFLA, to prepare for the storm, about 28,000 people were in shelters in the Hillsborough County, which is the county that Tampa Bay and St. Petersburg is in. When the hurricane arrived in the Tampa Bay and St. Petersburg area, according to The Washington Post, the storm was merely a Category 1 storm, and didn't cause any significant damage. Nevertheless, during and after the storm, many people in the area lost power. This was a part of the 6.5 million Florida residents without electricity on Monday, Sept. 11, which was around the time the storm was leaving Florida, as reported by NBC News.

Other than University Campus, the Hurricane Irma also past Centers, such as Tampa Center and the Ocala Center, which all were closed due to the storm.

Then, Hurricane Irma moved more up north to affect the Lake City Center, which is located in North Florida. The center has a total of 132 students and one full-time faculty member. This Center has not sustained damages to the office, but host college sustained some damages.

Like many of the centers that prepared for the storm, the Lake

National

City Center closed the Center days before the hurricane arrived to ensure that students and faculty to prepare for the storm.

"We closed the center at noon on Thursday 09/07 to allow time for our students, staff, and faculty to be able to get their homes prepared, buy non-perishables, water, and fill their gas tanks since, at that point in time, those things were already running low in Lake City. The extra time allotted allowed us time to get the things we all needed to make sure we were fully prepared to be without power for a few days," said Jessica Markham, the director of the Lake City Center.

And to keep in touch with students, the Center posted on the Facebook page, and Markham was able to personally call the staff members to keep them updated as well; however, she faced some difficulty due to power and internet being lost. Nevertheless, after the hurricane passed, the main priority for the center, according to Markham is to "get back to normal as quickly as possible and make sure students feel comfortable about catching up on their coursework."

"The students are my main concern, and I want to make sure they are aware that we are communicating with faculty and making sure they understand the hardship our students are facing since many are still without power/internet, and this will definitely impact their ability to get assignments caught up and completed on time," added Markham.

Lake City Center, which is located near the Florida-Georgia Border, was the last Center in Florida to get hit by the storm before the storm left Florida on its way to Georgia.

By the time Hurricane Irma reached to Georgia, the storm still was able to cause damage. About 450,000 people had to evacuate from Savannah and the from the coast, according to ABC News. Also, the storm surge and rains resulted in property damage and even flooding to the coastal areas. The winds also resulted in trees being ripped from the ground and hurling toward many homes, causing property damages and even resulting in at least three deaths, according ABC News.

Hurricane Irma caused further damage in Georgia, with reports that 1.5 million customers of Georgia Power and EMC being without power. Following the storm, the Georgia Power Company tweeted it is working to repair the damaged power lines and poles to help residents restore power and, according to Fox News, with the help of Army National Guard, local police had plans in progress to remove trees and downed power lines from the area to clear roadways.

The Saint Leo Savannah Center, which has 700 active students and 50 instructors, did not sustain major damages, according to Stephanie Stinski, the director of the Savanah Center. However, some of the students and faculty has faced damages: some without power and some with tree or flood damage. The powers are trying to be restored and the damages from flooding and trees are being assesses.

To prepare for the storm, like many Centers, the Savanah Center was able to close the Center early to ensure that students and faculty were able to prepare adequately for the storm.

"We closed the center starting on Friday, to give our students, faculty and staff time to make a plan that was best for their family; to either evacuate or make the decision to shelter in place during the storm," said Stinski. "The majority of the city evacuated, which meant that our students, faculty and staff would need time to find shelter and to get to their destination (through hours of traffic) before the storm approached our area."

The Center was able to keep in touch with faculty members and students through emails and Regroup phone messaging to ensure the safety of the people from the center.

"We were able to keep in contact daily with our students, faculty, and staff to relay information regarding the closure of the center, during the storm, assessing damage after the storm, and the reopening of the center. Many of our students and faculty lost power, so we wanted to be sure to reopen the center as soon as conditions were safe and the building was safe so that students could come into utilize our air conditioning, computer lab/ internet, and student lounge area," said Stinksi.

Also, the Center's main priority is to ensure the safety of the faculty and students and help students to be successful in their classes, which may include allowing students who aren't in the local area or has sustained damages, to have additional time to submit their work or have excused absences.

"We have some students and faculty that have not made it back to the local area, so we are contacting the students in classes that will not meet due to the storm and relaying information to both students and faculty on the availability of classrooms to make up missed class sessions, or to be utilized for study groups to prepare to return to class," said Stinski. "We want to support our students and faculty in any way that we can, which may result in delayed class meetings. We are staying in contact with our students and faculty to ensure their safety and assisting them in getting back to the local area and getting settled back in."

Photo from @FoxNews

According to Dr. Melanie Storms, Vice President of WorldWide ,6500 WorldWide students, along with students on the campus, were affected by the storm; this includes 100 students, studying online in the Caribbean and Puerto Rico.

"I couldn't have done this all without the support of my AVP Katie Degner and the Saint Leo WorldWide team under the organized direction of VP Dr. Melanie Storms, as well as my faculty, staff and student population. Everyone has been so supportive of one other in the centers, online and at the main campus. I've always known Saint Leo University was different and it was another solid reminder through this storm. I have actively witnessed everyone rise up and our SLU core values and dedication stand as a whole in the most beautiful way. I feel very fortunate to be a part of this team." - Alaina Plowdrey, Key West Center

Hurricane Irma caused damage to South Carolina as well, with the city of Charleston getting 4 feet of water as the eye of the storm was 250 miles ways. The North Charleston Center was closed for a bit as a result of the storm.

The Center Directors of the center affected were able to prepare the center's students and faculty and remain in touch to ensure the safety of it students. In fact, Lennox attributed not only the staff on campus for their tireless work but also the WorldWide staff as well, including the center directors.

"While no one was looking, our center directors managed through each circumstance with grace as they balanced the need to provide services with the concern for their staffs' and students' personal safety and well-being," said Lennox. "Our WorldWide staff worked to keep students informed and did their best to keep classes going throughout both events."

Also, the University had many initiatives to ensure that the students who remained on campus as well. In fact, there were many faculty members and staff from multiple departments staying on campus to assist students, who stayed on campus. Also, there were volunteers from people outside campus assisting with the dining hall to provide food as well. Following the storm, there were volunteer opportunities for students as well; for example, some students helped Frogmore Farms to replant blueberry trees on Saturday Sept. 16.

Along with showing his appreciation, Lennox, in his message to the students, also gave advice on how people, who want to help, can help as well.

"Many of you have reached out offering to help in any way possible. Not unusual for the Saint Leo community! We expect there may be students and their families with additional financial burdens, so I have asked the staff to generate a separate appeal for those who may wish to donate to a scholarship fund to allow affected students across the university to remain in school," said Lennox.

Lennox expressed his gratitude for the community for banning together to offer help. With the support, some Centers that were affected, like Gwinnett Center and North Charleston Center, were able to open on Wednesday, Sept. 13 but all Centers were able to reopen by Monday, Sept. 18, with the exception of the Key West Center.

"It is a story worth repeating to your friends and family. It is a story that demonstrates our core values are not just words displayed on a wall. It is a story that anyone choosing a college should hear.

Trophies are great, rankings even better—but at the end of the day, when no one is looking, I choose the heart and soul of Saint Leo's people over all of the public recognition available." - President Dr. William J. Lennox Jr.

Caribbean Braced Hurricane Irma

Randawnique Coakley
Managing Editor &
Worldly Education Editor

Photo from @stutzky

Many islands's natural vegetation have noticeably been stripped away; this can be seen in natural color images captured by Nasa's satellites, which can be viewed with article online.

Hurricane Irma, the once Category 5 storm, has wreak havoc in the Caribbean, leaving at least 28 people dead across the region, according to Reuters. The storm left a trail of destruction, leaving many islands with damaged infrastructures and loss of water, food supplies, and power.

Hurricane Irma causing significant damages on the many islands across the region, including Cuba, Barbuda, Antigua, Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

St. Thomas and St. John, two islands a part of the U.S Virgin Island took a major hit from Hurricane Irma, with many homes being ripped apart. According to CNBC, out of 52,000 that live on St. Thomas, 40,000 are homeless. Also, in an interview with CNBC, the Governor of the U.S Virgin Islands, Kenneth Mapp, also said that 90 percent of St. Thomas and 50 percent of St. John of the power lines are done. Although there may be worry from some islanders about access to food, clean water, and power, the governor has indicated in the interview that the islands are reaching out to get help, with him speaking to Trump twice and members of Trump's Cabinet as well. According to Reuters, Trump did increased federal funding to assist U.S Virgin Islands.

"I am telling my citizens and my residents that this is going to be a long haul, but we are going to make it happen," said Kenneth Mapp.

So far, The U.S Virgin Islands were assisted by three vessels from the US Navy, providing recovery and humanitarian assistance, according to the US Navy Institute's website. The website also reported that more than 1,900 people were evacuated, as stated from the Pentagon.

Also, the US Virgin Islands delate to Congress, Stacey Plaskett, also reported that islands took a big hit with the only hospital in St. Thomas being crippled with the roof of the hospital being ripped off by the storm winds of the hurricane, as reported by USA Today. To help patients, Plaskett was working on evacuating them to St. Croix via helicopters. According to CNBC, The CEO of the hospital, Schneider Regional Medical Center on St. Thomas, stated that the patients in critical condition were airlifted to Croix and even in Puerto Rico.

St. Croix, the largest of the U.S Virgin Islands have faced power outages and downed tree but have faced less damage the St. Thomas and St. John. In fact, a student on campus from St. Croix, Shaquanee Fenton, a junior a Criminal Justice major and Psychology Minor, confirmed that there were numerous patients being airlifted to St. Croix.

Besides helping patients, St. Croix also assisted St. Thomas, in particular by proving resources to the island after the devastating hurricane. She stated that residents from St. Croix were providing packages of water to island affected; however, this negatively affected the island becasue as she mentioned with Hurricane Maria, St. Croix is low of the hurricane supplies as a result. With Hurricane Maria heading the islands' way, she worries that the island won't be prepared for the storm.

This territory of the United States is getting federal help; however, similar resources may not be available for other countries in the Caribbean, like Antigua and Barbuda, which has taken a brutal hit from the storm as well.

In fact, residents of Barbuda, which is one-half of sovereign country of Antigua and Barbuda, have all been evacuated after the Hurricane. Therefore, for the first time 300 years, the island is inhabited since the population of about 1700 people, were evacuated to Antigua according to CNN. According to Business Insider, the Prime Minister, Gaston Browne, reported that upward of 90 percent of the island's structures were destroyed.

Anguilla, which is a British territory, suffered major damages as well, and military personnel arrived to assess the damages, according to Business Insider.

"In Anguilla, officials reported extensive damage to the airport, hospitals, shelters, and schools and said 90 percent of roads were impassable," according to NY Daily Beast.

St. Martin and St. Barts also faced significant damages as a result of the Hurricane Irma. These islands, which are located east of Puerto Rico, are territories of France, with part of St. Martin being a territory of the Netherlands as well. St. Barts faced some damages, such as damages to homes and power outages but other than that no deaths were reported; however, St. Martin got hit even worse by the hurricane. According to the LA Times, about 60 percent of homes were destroyed, along with other properties, such as stores, boats, and cars; and water supplies and power were cut as well; the French government also reported that the damages are estimated to be more than 1 billion dollars. Also, a total of 14 people were killed in St. Martin, according to LA Times.

Also, in Puerto Rico, the governor reported that at least three people were killed, according to NBC News. The island also faced damages to infrastructures, such as roadways, light posts, and trees. The island had a big problem with power outages as well, with more than a million people were to be out of electricity reported by NBC News days after the storm; however, even more than a week and a half following the storm about 80, 000 people were still without power, according to the Daily Beast.

The Hurricane also managed to hit Cuba as well. Despite the country evacuating about a million people from the vulnerable areas before the storm, at least ten people were killed, according to Business Insider. Cuba faced other significant damages, with trees and buildings being ripped apart and flooding, as reported by CNN.

The other islands that were affected were Turks and Caicos, the Bahamas, Hispaniola, with these island suffering minimal damages

As mentioned by Fenton, the Hurricane Maria is on its way to hit the Caribbean, heading to Dominica, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands as well. Therefore, this Category 5 storm, can wreak havoc in the Caribbean again after Hurricane Irma did only days before.

Photo from @AbingdonVesper

Many Caribbean island's main industry is tourism; therefore, with the damage caused by Hurricane Irma, their economies can be affected as well.

National

Red Cross Volunteer Experience

Wakens Leonard
Editor of Digital Content

The following is a four-day diary entry of a Lions' Pride staff member who traveled to Key West, days after Hurricane Irma passed, as a volunteer for the Red Cross. The diary details his experience while volunteering there.

Wednesday 9-13-17

I took the three and half hour drive to Palm Beach County with the intention of volunteering for the Red Cross. Before the drive, I got an email requesting assistance in many different areas, and many different departments from my Red Cross chapter. On the drive down south, I came upon many flooded roads, trees that were intrusive to the roadway, and heavy traffic as the influx of Floridians were making it back home. This extended my drive about 40 minutes, but I realized that I have a pretty good Spotify playlist as I lip synced most of the drive home. Passing motorists probably knew I was having a good time in my "bubble on wheels."

Once in Palm Beach, I realized that the area suffered less damage than I thought. There was the occasional uprooted palm tree or downed power line, but that's about it. I got home, and there wasn't any power at home, I knew that from the get-go though. I ate a meal with my sister, saw a movie, got back home and took a well-needed rest.

Thursday 9-14-17

I woke up at 8:00 a.m., sweating due to lack of air conditioning. I got ready and drove over to the Red Cross in West Palm Beach. The Palm Beach headquarters is in charge of most of South Florida; so, we had millions of residents to provide for. I was asked to be a driver, and our job was to get materials to shelters and other impacted areas in a safe, quick manner. My first job was to assist with grabbing a couple of hundred comfort bags; these bags contain basic hygiene supplies to be given out at our shelters. We also needed to grab over 2,000 clamshell takeout containers. These were to be used to stock up our Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs). Our ERVs are essentially mobile kitchens that go to impacted areas and give out hot meals.

Once that task was completed, I was assigned to go to Sam's Club with two other volunteers to purchase over 1,300 pieces of breakfast that needed to be delivered to shelters that ran out. Here's the catch: they needed the breakfast for the next morning, and it was already nearly 4:00 p.m. So, we split the tasks. I got the actual food, someone got drinks, and the last person got pastries. I grabbed foods ranging from pop tarts, to breakfast bars, apples, and oranges, and the list goes on! It was 7:30 p.m. when we finished loading into different Red Cross cars; I got lucky and was tasked with the Fort Pierce route, which was a little under an hour north. Once I made the delivery, the looks of joy on the faces of these residents were unforgettable. "I've been eating PB&J the past week, Thank You so much!" I made it home at about 10:00 p.m. Another volunteer had to travel to Sebring, which is two hours west of headquarters, making the delivery a total of four hours, and he got home around 1:00 a.m.

Friday 9-15-17

I woke up bright and early at 8:00 a.m. and the power was still nonexistent. My sister wanted to help; so, she tagged along for the ride. I went on over to headquarters for the next round of work. When we got there, we were told our ERVs were needed in Miami to feed residents without power; however, The ERVs needed to be restocked from their journeys yesterday. We had to clean out over 50 meal containers (about ten-gallon containers for scale). We loaded up the ERVs and sent them on their way. I should mention that one of the ERV's was driven from California to Florida.

Next task of the day was to get a pallet of water delivered to Belle Glade (about 50 minutes away), as their shelter water supply was running low. My sister and I loaded up the truck, and she went off with another volunteer to deliver the waters. I had to stay behind because I had a Telethon later in the day. While she was out delivering water, I went over to the local news station to begin the telethon.

I took about 20 phone calls and together we all raised over 11,000 dollars. In one phone call I received, the guy I was speaking to wanted to donate 1,000 dollars. He refused to give any information but said he has to help his "backyard."

Another guy called and said, "Thank God my home wasn't affected… but I have to help those whose homes were". He donated 500 dollars. I went back to headquarters, and I was told they needed me to go down to the Keys tomorrow morning at 5:00 a.m. and deliver some much-needed supplies before the residents come back. I told them "Of course!"

Photo taken by Wakens Leonard

Many homes in Florida Keys were destroyed due to Hurricane Irma.

Saturday 9-16-17

I woke up at 3: 00 a.m. to get ready - still without power. My sister and I went over to headquarters to start our day. We got the trucks ready to go and headed down south to Miami. We were driving huge box trucks; so commute time took much longer than if we were to drive cars. We got to a warehouse in Miami that carried a ton of Red Cross supplies. My truck loaded up six pallets of water and two pallets of water. Each food pallet contained about 86 boxes of meals, and each box can feed 12 people.

We drove down to the Keys; only essential personnel were allowed down there, so it was filled with a lot of emergency service vehicles and Red Cross cars. A putrid stench filled the truck, while we were driving through the Keys. We learned that there was a sewage breach and during the whole drive down there we smelled nothing but sewage. I realized that a lot of people won't have a place to go once they return because the houses had no roofs, were missing, or were flipped over. All the vegetation was dead, and Key Deer and endangered species were everywhere.

We had to make three stops, to drop off the supplies, unload the trucks, and talk to people who didn't evacuate in the shelters about their experiences. A guy I met had his mobile home flip over while he was in it; another lady wasn't able to find her home, even though she swore it was there when she left. Breaking down in tears, she was overwhelmed on what the next move should be. But we ensured she had a place to stay and food for her kids to eat - at least she didn't have to worry about that. That is why I am an American National Red Cross Volunteer.

Helping people has been in my blood since I was born. From this experience, I learned that anyone has the power to help one another. Seeing the conditions that some of these people are living in helped me put mine into perspective. Here I was without electricity, while people are now homeless. Being a shoulder to lean on and having conversations with shelter residents, I got to learn more about their backgrounds which helped them forget about their current situations at the moment. Would I spend 20 hours helping people in need again? Most definitely.That is why I am an American National Red Cross Volunteer.

For more information on how to volunteer, contact Wakens Leonard at wakens.leonard@email.saintleo.edu.

EMVs were used to provide food to many residents, who needed food.

Photos taken by Wakens Leonard

Many residents of South Florida were forced to evacuate their homes prior to the hurricane, and even days after the hurricane passed, some residents are still sleeping in shelters.

Science

Hurricane Irma Takes the Water from Tampa Bay

By Travis Farmer
Staff Writer

During the events of Hurricane Irma, an odd thing happened to the waters of Tampa Bay during the chaos of the storm. The waters around places like Tampa, Port Charlotte, and The Bahamas, have retreated from the coast due to Hurricane Irma. One video from Long Island in the Bahamas went viral prior to Irma making landfall in Florida. Twitter user Kaydi_K posted the video of the ocean on the northwest side of her island being completely dried up, with people walking out into the "ocean" and being able to see buoys and even a boat grounded in the distance. The user even finds an old lost anchor that they play with a bit.

This viral video prompted many news outlets to report on it, with the Washington Post's resident meteorologist and weather editor Angela Fritz stating "As a meteorologist, there are things you learn in textbooks that you may never see in person ... This is one of those things — a hurricane strong enough to change the shape of an ocean."

After this viral video took hold, the Tampa Bay area encountered the same phenomena as Long Island experienced. The waters in Tampa Bay receded, leaving the boat markers and seaweed on dry land where the water should have been. Some adventurous Floridians even

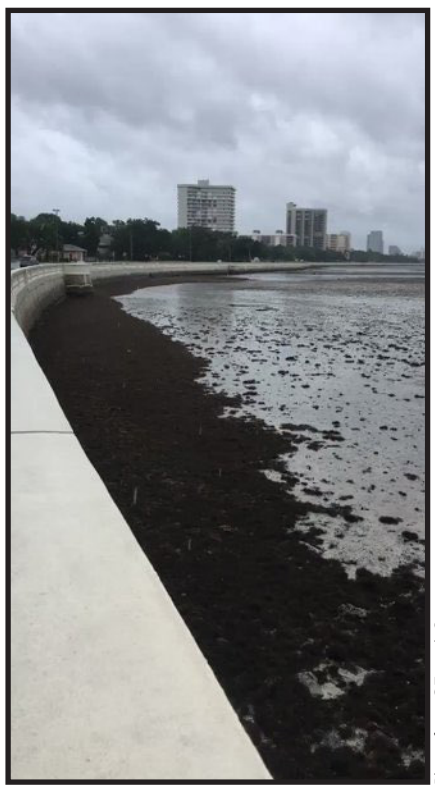

Photo from @TammieSouza

Tampa Bay's waters pulled by the force of Hurricane Irma as it approached the area.

went out into the bay to take videos and to treasure hunt, with one user on Reddit even stating "get a metal detector stat!'

While many people know that a receding shoreline is a warning of an imminent tsunami or giant wave, in this case, it is actually a symptom of the Hurricane's massive pressure differential. The water refilled at a rapid rate, but not with a fifty-foot wave that could threaten the entire area.

But why does this happen? Meteorologists explained, on various websites, that the pressure of the storm could act as a vacuum for the water, creating a "bulge" under the

Photo from @KathyOrrFOX29

Waters from Tampa Bay retreated back, allowing people to walk on what was once area filled with water.

Photo from Rob10News

Tampa Bay, which usually is filled with water, had its water pulled by Hurricane Irma but during the storm the water was returned.

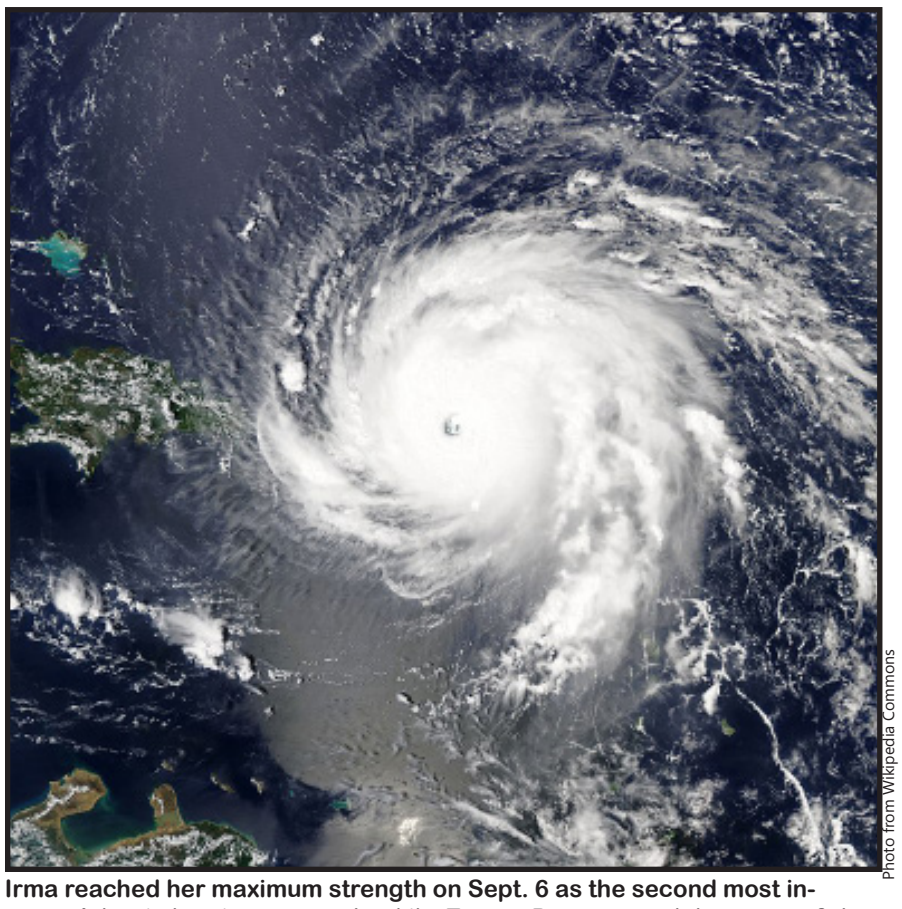

Photo from Wikipedia Commons

Irma reached her maximum strength on Sept. 6 as the second most intense Atlantic hurricane ever. Luckily, Tampa Bay escaped the worst of the storm through several lucky factors.

center of the storm where the pressure is exceptionally low and the winds are the strongest. This bulge is where all the water from the bay and other areas went. The water returned once the winds shifted, rushing back into the bay with storm surge waves. Some meteorologists, such as Stephen Shiveley from the National Weather Service, stated that this bay receding actually helped save Tampa Bay, as it kept the storm surge and waves much lower during the brunt of the storm.

This "reverse storm surge" left many people confused and bewildered, but none quite as bewildered as some manatees that were grounded in Sarasota Bay during the low tide. Two manatees were noticed by some passersby. Facebook user Marcelo Clavijo said he and some other people helped move the manatees closer to the water in a video that quickly went viral, attracting eight million views after the hurricane.

A marine biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission said that they had received several reports of tidally stranded manatees, but were not going to assist the manatees, as they are used to being tidally stranded sometimes. Nadia Gordon with the Florida FWC told the Bradenton Herald "We're not actually intervening at this point ... Unfortunately, with manatees, they are accustomed to being tidally stranded at times."

The manatees inaptly named Manatee County are only one example of how a hurricane can affect animals and the ecosystem at large. Hurricanes can destroy habitats, defoliate trees, and reduce food availability. Hurricanescience.org cites one example being the Puerto Rican Parrot; this species is the only the only native parrot in Puerto Rico, and the critically endangered population went from 47 to 23 parrots after Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

It is no doubt that hurricanes are terrifying and powerful, but also, they can be seen as a way to better understand science and our environment. While they destroy ecosystems and drain our water, they leave ways for scientists to better discover how future hurricanes can affect our area and world enlarge.